

Rural Housing Service, USDA

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The borrower will have 10 days to submit the additional material to address any issues raised by the Agency.

(ii) The rent change is not approved until the Agency issues a written approval. If there is no response from the Agency within the 30-day period, the rent change is considered automatic. The following budgets are not eligible for automatic approval:

(A) Budgets with rent increases above \$25 per unit; and

(B) Budgets that are submitted late or that miss other deadlines set by the Agency.

(4) If the Agency denies the budget approval, the Agency will notify the borrower in writing.

(5) If budget approval is denied, the borrower shall continue to operate the housing project on the basis of the most recently approved budget.

§ 3560.304 Initial operating capital.

(a) *Purpose.* To provide a source of capital for start-up costs, such as the purchase of equipment, and paying operating, maintenance, and debt service expenses. Borrowers are required to make an initial operating capital contribution to the general operating account as described in § 3560.64.

(b) *Authorized uses of initial operating capital.* Initial operating capital may be used only to pay for approved budgeted expenses.

(c) *Withdrawal of initial operating capital.* Initial operating capital funds may be withdrawn by a borrower if:

(1) The initial operating capital was provided from the borrower's own funds;

(2) The borrower requests the withdrawal after the second year of housing project operations and prior to the 7th year of operations;

(3) The housing project has had a 90 percent occupancy rate for a period of 12 months prior to the withdrawal request;

(4) The withdrawal will not affect the financial viability of the housing project;

(5) Contributions to the reserve account are at authorized levels;

(6) The withdrawal request will not result in rent increases; and

(7) There are no outstanding deficiencies in management's physical maintenance of the housing project.

§ 3560.305 Return on investment.

(a) *Borrower's return on investment.* Borrowers may receive a return on their investment (ROI) in accordance with the terms of their loan agreement and the following:

(1) If there is a positive net cash flow in housing project operations, the ROI may be taken by the borrower after the housing project's fiscal year, provided that the balance of the reserve account is equal to or greater than required deposits minus authorized withdrawals. If the annual financial reports indicate that an ROI should not have been taken, borrowers will be required to return any unauthorized ROI.

(2) If there is negative cash flow in housing project operations, the Agency may authorize the borrower to take the ROI only after the Agency has reviewed the housing project's annual financial reports and determines:

(i) Surplus cash exists in either the general operating account as defined in § 3560.306(d)(1) or the reserve account, if the balance is greater than the required deposits minus authorized withdrawals.

(ii) The housing project has sufficient funds to address identified capital or operational needs.

(b) *Unpaid return on investment.* An earned, but unpaid ROI for the previous year only may be requested by the borrower and authorized by the Agency under the provisions of § 3560.305(a)(2) provided the current year's ROI has been paid first and a rent increase is not required to generate funds to pay the unpaid ROI.

§ 3560.306 Reserve account.

(a) *Purpose.* To meet the major capital expense needs of a housing project, borrowers must establish and maintain a reserve account.

(b) *Financial management of the reserve account.* Borrower management of the reserve account is subject to the requirements of 7 CFR part 1902, subpart A regarding supervised bank accounts.

(c) *Funding of the reserve account.* Borrowers must make payments to the

reserve account in the amount established in loan documents, beginning with the first loan payment or a date specified in loan documents.

(d) *Transfer of surplus general operating account funds.* (1) The general operating account will be deemed to contain surplus funds when the balance at the end of the housing project's fiscal year, after all payables, exceeds 20 percent of the operating and maintenance expenses. If the borrower is escrowing taxes and insurance premiums, include the amount that should be escrowed by year end and subtract such tax and insurance premiums from operating and maintenance expenses used to calculate 20 percent of the operating and maintenance expenses.

(2) If a housing project's general operating account has surplus funds at the end of the housing project's fiscal year, the Agency will require the borrower to use the surplus funds to address capital needs, make a deposit in the housing project's reserve account, reduce the debt service on the borrower's loan, or reduce rents in the following year. At the end of the borrower's fiscal year, if the borrower is required to transfer surplus funds from the general operating account to the reserve account, the transfer does not change the future required contributions to the reserve account.

(e) *Account requirements.* Borrowers must establish and maintain the reserve account according to § 3560.65, § 3560.302(c)(5), and the following requirements:

(1) Reserve accounts must be deposited in interest-bearing accounts or securities; and

(2) Reserve accounts must be supervised accounts that require Agency countersignatures on all withdrawals.

(f) *Funds invested in securities.* In addition to the requirements specified in paragraph (e) of this section, the following requirements apply when reserve funds are invested in securities:

(1) The reserve account must be held either at a Federally insured domestic institution such as a bank, savings and loan association, credit union, or at a domestic institution authorized to sell securities.

(2) The borrower must record the price actually paid for the securities.

When designated as a reserve deposit, the price paid must equal the required contribution to reserves.

(3) Borrowers must be knowledgeable about industry practices and consider the impact of typical fees and charges for purchases and sales and maintenance of an account when making investment decisions. Such fees may be paid for out of reserves, only with the consent of the Agency. Housing project funds may not be used to pay for a financial advisor.

(g) *Use of the reserve account.* (1) Borrowers must request Agency approval of reserve account withdrawals prior to the withdrawal. Borrowers must inform the Agency of planned uses of reserve accounts in their annual capital budget if known at budget planning time. Any item on the approved capital budget does not require additional pre-approval by the Agency.

(2) The Agency will indicate any conditions governing withdrawals from a reserve account at the time it approves the withdrawal.

(3) In emergency situations, the Agency may specify special procedures to provide an expedited approval process for the use of the reserve account.

(4) The Agency may approve the use of reserve funds for operating costs when circumstances that are determined by the Agency to be beyond the borrower's control have resulted in a shortfall in the housing project's general operating account.

(h) *Allowable uses.* Allowable uses of reserve funds include the following:

(1) Major capital improvements and replacements.

(2) Housing project operating expenses provided the requirement of paragraph (g)(4) of this section has been met, including:

(i) Payments due on the loan, or

(ii) Payment of a return on investment at the end of the borrower's fiscal year if such payment comes from surplus operating funds in the reserve account.

(3) With Agency approval, borrowers operating on a for-profit or a limited profit basis may make an annual withdrawal from the reserve account, equal to no more than 25 percent of the interest earned on a reserve account during the prior year.

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(4) For other purposes, which in the judgment of the Agency will promote the loan purposes, strengthen the security or facilitate, improve, or maintain the housing and the orderly collection of the loan without jeopardizing the loan or impairing the adequacy of the security.

(i) *Records.* Borrowers must maintain records documenting all expenses that were paid by withdrawals from the reserve account.

(j) *Changes to reserve requirements.* (1) As projects age, the required reserve account level may be adjusted to meet anticipated "life-cycle" needs, including equipment and facility replacement costs, by amending the loan agreement/resolution.

(2) The Agency may approve a change in the reserve account funding level based on the findings of an approved capital needs assessment. The approval to increase reserve account funding levels will take into consideration the housing project's approved budget and the housing project's ability to support increased reserve account deposits without causing basic rents to exceed conventional rents for comparable units in the area.

(k) *Excess reserves.* Amounts in the reserve account which exceed the total required by the loan or grant agreement must be used, at the direction of the Agency, for any of the following:

(1) Pay for expenses specified in a long-term capital plan;

(2) Make payments and reamortize the Agency loan;

(3) Reduce rents by a transfer to the general operating account;

(4) Fund preservation incentives authorized in subpart N of this part; or

(5) Cover other expenditures determined to be related to the purpose of the housing project and in the best interest of the Federal Government.

(l) *Procurement.* The requirements of § 3560.102(g), (j), and (k), and all other Agency requirements relating to procurement, bidding, identity-of-interest, cost-reasonableness, and construction management apply to any work or services paid out of reserve funds. Structural repairs and other significant work on major building systems such as heating or air conditioning must be done in accordance with the

requirements of 7 CFR part 1924, subpart A.

§ 3560.307 Reports.

(a) *Required reports.* Borrowers must submit required reports using Agency-approved formats.

(b) *Quarterly and monthly reports.* The Agency may require quarterly or monthly reports to monitor financial progress when closer supervision is warranted.

§ 3560.308 Annual financial reports.

(a) *General.* Borrowers must submit annual financial reports that meet the requirements of this section. The annual financial reports to be submitted are the Multi-Family Housing (MFH) Project Budget with actual expenditures and the MFH Balance Sheet. Annual financial reports are due to the Agency within 90 days of the end of the borrower's fiscal year.

(1) Borrowers with 16 or more units in their housing project must base their annual financial reports on an engagement report completed according to agreed upon procedures established by the Agency as specified in paragraph (b) of this section. Borrowers must include the engagement report with their annual financial reports submitted to the Agency.

(2) Borrowers with less than 16 units in their housing project must submit annual financial reports using a limited scope engagement based on Agency approved procedures and certify that the housing meets the performance standards established in paragraph (c) of this section. Borrowers may use a CPA to prepare this report. For properties that prepare a limited scope engagement, the Agency may undertake random audits, once every two or three years.

(3) If a third party requires it, the borrower may have a CPA prepare an audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards (GAGAS). Costs incurred to obtain this audit are an allowable project expense.

(b) *Engagement requirements.* Borrowers required to submit annual financial reports based on an engagement performed by a CPA must meet the following requirements: